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ABSTRACT

A study was designed to investigate the validity and reliability of the adult Career Concerns Inventory, which assesses career concerns of adults of any age and occupation. Subjects, 4 male and 165 female students (ages 23 to 62) enrolled in the graduate nursing program at a southern university, were administered the adult Career Concerns Inventory (CCI) and the Career Development Inventory (CDI), which assesses the readiness of respondents to make sound vocational choices. The CCI focuses on the planfulness and exploration of D. E. Super's model of vocational or career maturity; it assesses exploration, establishment, maintenance, disengagement, and career change. The CDI is a multidimensional inventory focusing not only on the planning and exploration dimension of Super's model, but also on the additional dimensions of decision-making and information about the world of work. Data from responses underwent canonical correlation, stepwise multiple-regression analysis, and Pearson correlation and alpha reliability coefficients. Results support the validity of the CCI as a psychometric instrument. However, the CCI should be used in conjunction with other measures, such as the CDI. (TJH)

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A Study of the Validity and Reliability of the Adult Career Concerns Inventory

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A Study of the Validity and Reliability of

the Adult Career Concerns Inventory

As originally viewed by Super (1955, 1957), vocational or career maturity was a construct of importance primarily during adolescence. The vocationally mature adolescent was seen as being ready to make prevocational and vocational decisions.

Although definitely a milestone for adolescents, it has become evident that vocational maturity is not achieved during the adolescent period with there being no further vocational development. There has been ample evidence that vocational developmental tasks typically dealt with during the adolescent years resurface during the adult years (Super & Kidd, 1979). Vocational development is a process ongoing over a period of time. Throughout their professional lives, individuals typically do not make one career choice but a number of them starting first with the selection on an occupation and a job and then another job and perhaps another occupation and another job . . . . There is a recycling as adults confront circumstantial and personal changes throughout their lives (cf. Crites, 1976; Levinson, 1978; Super & Kidd, 1979).

Super (1977) has advanced a model of vocational maturity in adulthood. Drawing heavily on his adolescent model, he included the same basic components: planfulness, exploration, information, decision-making, and reality orientation (Super & Kidd, 1979).

Although Super saw a need to develop a measure for this model, the initial effort was by Zelkowitz (1975) who, for a doctoral dissertation, developed and tested a measure of adult vocational maturity. Others contributed to the development of interim measures, and a finalized version,

the Adult Career Concerns Inventory (Super & Thompson, 1985) is now available. In the research manual for the Adult Career Concerns Inventory, Super, Thompson, and Lindeman (1987) acknowledged that, although this instrument is ready for cautious use, unanswered questions about it remain. Among these questions are those regarding its validity and reliability.

Few studies of the validity of the current form of the Adult Career Concerns Inventory have been reported (Mahoney, 1987; McCloskey, 1986). Reliability estimates (mdn = .90) have been reported for two groups: 68 academic professionals and 331 corporate employees (Super et al., 1987). Obviously, other studies by other people in other settings are needed.

Therefore, this study was designed to investigate the validity and reliability of the Adult Career Concerns Inventory. Specifically looked at were the construct validity of this new measure and its internal consistency reliability.

Method

Subjects

The population was all the students seeking a master's degree who had been accepted at the time of this study in the graduate nursing program at a university in the South. Four were males and 165 were females. They were from 23 to 62 years of age.

Procedure

By mail all potential subjects were offered an opportunity to participate in the study. The letter sent included the purpose of the study, a description of what was expected of the respondents, the assurance of anonymity and confidentiality of the individuals who responded, and the places where and dates and times when the subjects could complete the instruments being administered in this study. Subjects agreeing to

participate returned an enclosed postcard on which they indicated that they could come for testing.

Those who agreed to participate but who could not come at scheduled testing times were mailed instruments to complete at home along with a cover letter giving date due and a stamped envelope in which to return the inventories. To guarantee that the data would not be biased by a change in setting, the subjects were also given a list of conditions to follow which would ensure that the assessment procedure for them would be identical to that followed in the onsite testing.

Inventories to which all subjects responded were the Adult Career Concerns Inventory (Super & Thompson, 1985) and the Career Development Inventory, College and University Form (Super, Thompson, Lindeman, Jordaan, & Myers, 1981).

Instruments

The Adult Career Concerns Inventory is an inventory appropriate to assess career concerns of adults of any age and occupation. Focused on the planfulness and exploration factors of Super's theoretical model of vocational maturity (Super et al., 1987), it assesses exploration, establishment, maintenance, disengagement, and career change.

Subjects responded to 65 statements reflecting career concerns at these stages by rating each statement as being of "no concern" (1), "little concern" (2), "some concern" (3), "considerable concern" (4), and "great concern" (5) to them at the time. Sample items are:

> "Finding a line of work that really interests me." (exploration--items 1-15)
>
> "Developing a reputation in my line of work." (establishment--items 16-30)
>
> "Maintaining the occupational position I have achieved." (maintenance--items 31-45)

"Planning well for retirement." (disengagement--items 46-60)

"Clarifying my thinking about whether or not to make a career change." (career change--items 61-65)

Ratings given to the items comprising the respective stages were summed, and an average item rating was calculated as the resulting score for each stage.

The Career Development Inventory is a multidimensional inventory focusing not only on the planning and exploration dimensions of Super's model but also on the additional dimensions of decision-making and information about the world of work (Super et al., 1987). The purpose of the inventory is to assess the readiness of respondents to make sound vocational choices.

Part I of the College and University Form which was used in this study consists of four scales: Career Planning (20 items), Career Exploration (20 items), Decision-Making (20 items), and World-of-Work Information (20 items). In the Career Planning subtest, respondents were asked how much thinking and planning they have done in relation to 11 career preparation tasks. Then they were asked to indicate the amount of knowledge they have regarding nine aspects of the work they would like to do. In the Career Exploration subtest, respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they would seek help when making their career plans from any of 10 sources. They were also asked to indicate how much useful information each of these 10 sources has already provided them as they were planning for the future. In the Decision-Making subtest, respondents were asked to determine what one should do in each of 20 career planning or decision-making situations. In World-of-Work Information, they were queried as to their knowledge about jobs, how to find one, and how to succeed at one.

Career planning and career exploration scores were combined to yield a score on career development attitudes. Career decision-making and world-of-work scores were combined to give a score on career development knowledge and skills. A combination of scores from all four subtests yielded the career development orientation total score.

Machine scoring by the publisher provided standard scores and percentiles on all four subtests plus the combinations.

Analyses and Results

Results of a canonical correlation between the exploration, establishment, maintenance, disengagement, and career change scores on the Adult Career Concerns Inventory (Set 1) and the planning, exploration, decision-making, and world-of-work scores on the Career Development Inventory (Set 2) are presented in Table 1. The test of the significance of Wilks' lambda

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Insert Table 1 about here

(.66) for Root 1 indicated that the first R_c^2 is statistically significant, F (20, 316) = 2.10, $p < .01$. Wilks' lambda was not significant for any of the remaining roots.

Results of the canonical correlation between the Set 1 Adult Career Concerns Inventory scores and career development attitudes and career development knowledge and skills scores from the Career Development Inventory (Set 2) are presented in Table 2. Wilks' lambda (.78) for Root 1 in

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Insert Table 2 about here

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this analysis is significant, $F(10, 194) = 2.58$, $p < .01$. Lambda for the second root was not significant.

Results of a stepwise multiple regression between the Adult Career Concerns Inventory scores and the career orientation total score from the ~~Adult~~ Career ~~Concerns~~ Development Inventory also resulted in a significant correlation. Maintenance (beta = .37) was entered at the first step in the regression analysis with the resulting multiple R being .23, $F(1, 102) = 5.76$, $p < .05$. Entered at the next step was exploration (beta = -.30) with the multiple R at that point being .35 which was a significant increase, F change = 7.99, $p < .01$. At this step the .05 limits were reached and no additional variables were entered.

Pearson correlation coefficients between age and Adult Career Concerns Inventory scores were -.12 ($p = .10$) for exploration, -.12 ($p = .11$) for establishment, .09 ($p = .18$) for maintenance, .32 ($p = .000$) for disengagement, and .07 ($p = .23$) for career change.

Alpha reliability coefficients were .95, .95, .94, .93, and .94 respectively for exploration, establishment, maintenance, disengagement, and career change on the Adult Career Concerns Inventory.

Discussion

The canonical correlational analyses support Super's career development model and the construct validity of the Adult Career Concerns Inventory (Super & Kidd, 1979; Super et al., 1987). An examination of the structure coefficients in these analyses indicates that the dominant constructs emerging for the Adult Career Concerns Inventory are a moving away from maintenance or holding onto a position toward exploration of career possibilities and career change.

Dominant constructs from the Career Development Inventory which correlated significantly with the Adult Career Concerns Inventory were planning and exploration. It appears that the Adult Career Concerns Inventory measures what it was designed to measure with some degree of validity for this group of graduate nursing students. Furthermore, given the ages ($\underline{M}$ = 37 yrs) of the subjects in this study and the fact that they were returning to college to seek an advanced degree, it might be predicted that for them there is a mid-life crisis. They would like to advance even though they are well established.

Results of the multiple regression further support the validity of the Adult Career Concerns Inventory. The career orientation total from the Career Development Inventory, generally considered a measure of career maturity, was positively related to maintenance and negatively related to exploration.

Likewise, the correlation between age and Adult Career Concerns Inventory scores was as might be theoretically predicted (Guthrie & Herman, 1982; Lipsett & Rodgers, 1980; Slocum & Cron, 1985; Super, 1957). The subtest most highly correlated with age was disengagement. With age, career deceleration commences. As people get older they tend to reduce their pace and work load and begin planning for retirement. Such a trend was found in this study.

With regard to reliability, the alpha coefficients found in this study are impressive. They support the internal consistency of the five subtests of the Adult Career Concerns Inventory. That they corroborate high reliability coefficients earlier reported by others (Super et al., 1987) lends creditability to the claim that this instrument is indeed a reliable measure.

Although the Adult Career Concerns Inventory appears to be psychometrically sound, the use of other measures in conjunction with it would be a recommended practice in assessing career development in adults. As earlier pointed out, the focus of this inventory is strictly on the planfulness and exploration dimensions of Super's career maturity model. That these dimensions are also measured in part by the Career Development Inventory was indicated by the significant relationships between scores on the two inventories. However, redundancy indices from the canonical analyses show plainly that much of the variance in the Adult Career Concerns Inventory is not accounted for by the Career Development Inventory. The two measures appear to be tapping different aspects to a great extent and, thus, both measures should provide information useful to those interested in the career or vocational adjustment of adults of all ages.

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Table 1

Canonical Correlation[a] Between the Adult Career Concerns Inventory and the Career Development Inventory: I

Variable	Standardized canonical coefficient	Structure coefficient	Variance explained	Redundancy index	R_c	R_c^2
Set 1--ACCI						
Exploration	.19	.24				
Establishment	.73	.04				
Maintenance	-1.30	-.56				
Disengagement	.09	-.02				
Career change	.38	.52				
			.13	.06		
Set 2--CDI						
Planning	.30	.61				
Exploration	.65	.82				
Decision-making	-.01	.10				
World-of-work	.47	.59				
			.35	.02		
					.43	.18

[a]Canonical correlation for Root 1--canonical correlations for Roots 2, 3, and 4 were not significant.

Note. N = 104.

Table 2

Canonical Correlation[a] Between the Adult Career Concerns Inventory and the Career Development Inventory: II

Variable	Standardized canonical coefficient	Structure coefficient	Variance explained	Redundancy index	R_c	R^2_c
Set 1--ACCI						
Exploration	.52	.32				
Establishment	.39	-.09				
Maintenance	-1.27	-.60				
Disengagement	.24	-.06				
Career change	.22	.45				
			.14	.08		
Set 2--CDI						
Developmental attitudes	.96	.96				
Knowledge/skills	.29	.28				
			.50	.02		
					.40	.16

[a]Canonical correlation for Root 1--canonical correlation for Root 2 was not significant.

Note. N = 104.